

Techplomacy

Newsletter | March 2026



Office of the Special Envoy
on Technology

IN THIS EDITION

GLASSHOUSEPR

State of PR and Ai Report
Launch

THE ELDERS

Statement on Ai Global
Governance

19th AMBASSADORS CONFERENCE

Kenya's Ambassadors, High
Commissioners, and Consul Generals
converge in Nairobi

TECHCARES FORUM

Designing intelligence for
inclusivity

“

*In pursuit of a Safe, Secure,
Inclusive, and Trustworthy
Digital Future.*

”





“

**No country can develop
beyond its knowledge
capacity.**

”

- H.E (DR) PRESIDENT WILLIAM RUTO, REPUBLIC OF KENYA



Foreword

Welcome to the March 2026 edition of the *Techplomacy Newsletter*.

This month's edition captures something I have been reflecting on with increasing urgency: we are no longer preparing for the Age of Intelligence. We are already in it. Intelligence is becoming embedded across economies, institutions, public systems, diplomacy, media, and everyday life. What matters now is not whether this transition is happening, but whether we are building the capability, partnerships, and governance needed to shape it on our own terms.

Across the engagements captured in these pages, a common thread emerges. Whether the conversation is about AI governance, digital safety, infrastructure, research, investment, or diplomatic practice, the real question is one of execution. How do we move from aspiration to implementation? How do we ensure that technology strengthens sovereignty rather than weakens it? How do we build systems that are inclusive, trusted, resilient, and grounded in our realities?

For Kenya, and for Africa more broadly, this moment must be approached with both confidence and discipline. We should not simply inherit models built elsewhere and assume they answer our needs. We must build from context, from need, and from opportunity.

That means investing across the full AI stack — from data, compute, and energy to talent, use cases, and governance.

It also means understanding that no country, institution, or sector can do this alone. The future will be shaped by partnerships that build capacity, create shared value, and respect sovereignty in an era of interdependence.

This edition reflects that wider effort. It brings together work on global governance, economic diplomacy, digital partnerships, safe digital futures, public-interest innovation, and the evolving role of diplomacy itself.

Taken together, these engagements point to a larger truth: in the Age of Intelligence, leadership will belong to those who can connect vision to delivery.

Thank you for reading, and for continuing to engage with this work.

Amb. Philip Thigo

Amb. Philip Thigo, MBS
Special Envoy on Technology

Activities

Public Relations in the Age of Intelligence

State of AI in PR Africa Report Launch



Middle: Mary Njoki Founder and CEO of Glass House PR and Amb. Philip Thigo (TechEnvoy) launches the State of PR and AI in Africa Report.

Earlier this month, the Office of the Special Envoy on Technology delivered the keynote address at the launch of the **'State of AI in PR in Africa Report 2026'** by Glass House PR in Nairobi. The gathering brought together industry leaders, practitioners, and emerging talent during a time when the communications field is experiencing significant change.

The report provides one of the clearest snapshots to date of this transition. Drawing on insights from **54 public relations agencies across 16 African countries**, representing over **7,000 professionals**, and including perspectives from the next generation, such as **80 students** from seven Kenyan universities, it shows both the scale and the direction of change across the continent.

Artificial intelligence is now embedded across the communications value chain — from content creation and campaign execution to media monitoring and audience engagement. What was, until recently, experimental has become operational.

The result is a significant increase in the speed, scale, and precision with which narratives are developed and deployed.

As AI lowers the cost of producing and distributing content, the differentiator is no longer the ability to create, but the ability to exercise judgment. Creativity, emotional intelligence, cultural fluency, and strategic thinking are becoming more — not less — valuable in this new environment.

The role of the communications professional is evolving from producer to interpreter, curator, and decision-maker.

We are now operating in a context where information moves faster than verification. Generative AI and synthetic media have made it possible to create highly convincing content — text, image, audio, and video — at scale and at speed.

False narratives can propagate rapidly, often outpacing efforts to correct them. This creates new and immediate risks for institutions, markets, and public trust.

In this environment, public relations is no longer only about storytelling. It is increasingly about information integrity.

The profession is being redefined as a guardian of credibility — responsible not only for shaping narratives but also for ensuring their authenticity, accuracy, and trustworthiness. This is a more complex obligation, requiring new skills, new ethical principles, and a deeper integration of technology and human oversight.

The continent's demographic edge — a young, digitally savvy population — combined with quickly changing communication systems, positions Africa to influence how AI is used in media and communications. However, this outcome is not guaranteed. It will rely on how well the ecosystem invests in talent, governance, and responsible innovation.

The report's findings emphasize a broader point: public relations is no longer secondary to economic and social systems.

In a time when narratives influence markets, shape behavior, and build institutional trust, communications are becoming a key part of strategic infrastructure.

[Download the Report](#)





Activities

Africa's Place in the Ai World | Mobile Web Conference 2026 Collaborating across the AI Stack

At the margins of Mobile World Congress 2026, I joined a timely conversation at the Africa Stand hosted by GSMA on the future of AI in Africa. It was a strong exchange **with Hardy Pemhiwa, President and Group CEO of Cassava Technologies; Oswald Jumira; Mohhtar Seck, Chief of the Innovation and Technology Section at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa;** and colleagues from GSMA.

The conversation is slowly moving beyond AI as hype or a narrow conversation about tools and applications towards the infrastructure of intelligence itself, towards Africa's ability to build the capacity to produce, deploy, and govern intelligence on its own terms.

First, Africa must **shift from rhetoric to coordinated investment**. If we fail to invest in the systems that will shape the intelligence economy, others will, and they will set the terms.

Second, **investing in Africa's statistical capacity** and national statistical systems is crucial for developing more robust sovereign data ecosystems. Without improved data foundations, stronger intelligence systems will remain unattainable.

Third, **compute, talent, and energy are fast becoming strategic infrastructure** for development. They are no longer peripheral to growth. They are becoming central to competitiveness.

Fourth, **the opportunity is technological, industrial, and economic**. It cuts across all sectors, all the time.

And finally, **partnerships will determine whether this happens**. Governments cannot do it alone. Neither can the private sector, academia, or innovators in isolation. But partnerships must be designed around capability building and shared value, not dependency. Africa must be a site of co-creation, not simply a market for downstream deployment.

Convening of Africa Ecosystem Players at Cassava Pavilion at MWC2026



Activities

AmCham and the Work on Digital Partnerships Building the best of class across the Ai Stack

This month, we held an important conversation with the American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) Digital Economy Taskforce — Public Sector Working Group, graciously hosted at the Google offices in Nairobi. What followed was a reflection of how far Kenya-U.S. digital collaboration has come, and how much further it must go.

AmCham is not a peripheral actor in this ecosystem. With a network of **more than 300 companies spanning agriculture, manufacturing, health, energy, infrastructure, and the digital economy**, it sits at the intersection of **trade, investment, and policy advocacy**. That positioning makes it a consequential platform — one capable of shaping both the commercial and policy conditions that underpin innovation and long-term competitiveness.

The central thread of our discussion was **the role of U.S. companies across the full AI stack**. From cloud infrastructure and advanced compute to cybersecurity, data governance, enterprise systems, skilling platforms, and applied use cases, these capabilities are already embedded in Kenya's digital ecosystem.

The task ahead is not simply to accelerate deployment, but to ensure that such partnerships **strengthen local capability, support homegrown innovation, and align with national development priorities**.

This is also a question of how collaboration is structured. **Kenya is not a market to be served. It is a co-architect of the digital future it is building.** The most durable partnerships will be those that respect Kenya's right to **set its own digital agenda, govern its own data, and develop its own technological capabilities** — not as conditions to be negotiated, but as foundations to be honored. Collaboration that does not respect these foundations is not a partnership. It is dependency dressed in another language.

We also examined the policy dimension. As Kenya advances its frameworks on AI, cloud, and data governance, **clarity and predictability are not optional features — they are the foundation of investor confidence**.

Safeguarding public trust and protecting the public interest must not result in frameworks that are prematurely restrictive, protectionist, or disconnected from how innovation and investment actually operate. Getting this balance right is itself a strategic capability.



Amb. Thigo (Center) with AmCham Digital Economy Sub-Committee, led by Michael Murungi of GOOGLE (far right).

A further point of alignment was the need to **connect policy more directly with implementation**. Digital policy cannot be designed in isolation from infrastructure, talent development, financing, and real-world deployment — and in the Age of Intelligence, **coherence across these domains is not a governance ideal. It is a competitive condition**. This points to a structural challenge we must be honest about. AI and emerging technologies cut across foreign affairs, ICT and the digital economy, science and innovation, and broader economic policy. **No single ministry governs the full stack**, and building across it will require a **more integrated institutional approach** and a more deliberate posture in how we engage partners at every level.

What this conversation reinforced, above all, is the imperative to **move beyond dialogue into execution**. Platforms such as the Action Lab, alongside investment convenings and targeted sectoral partnerships, offer real pathways to translate alignment into delivery — in infrastructure, in talent, in public-interest AI applications.

This engagement underscored a broader truth: in the Age of Intelligence, **outcomes will not be determined by access to technology alone**. They will be shaped by **the strength of partnerships, the quality of policy environments, and the discipline to act across the full stack with clarity and intent** — aligned with the **Kenyan context and sovereign priorities**.

Announcement

Major Diplomatic Win for Kenya

WIPO Green Ambassador

Amb. Philip Thigo was designated a **WIPO GREEN Ambassador** by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), this month, the first in Africa.

WIPO GREEN is the World Intellectual Property Organization's platform for sustainable technology and climate innovation. It is designed to connect technology providers, innovators, companies, institutions, and governments in order to accelerate the diffusion and deployment of green technologies.

Ambassador Thigo has been **appointed as a WIPO GREEN Ambassador for Kenya**, adding an important global role in sustainability and innovation to his work at the intersection of technology, public policy, and development. **WIPO GREEN's Director General** announced the appointment, noting his record of championing sustainability, transparency, and responsible technology adoption across government, industry, academia, and civil society.

Through this appointment, Thigo joins three other **WIPO GREEN Ambassadors**. The program includes **Zou Ling**, WIPO's inaugural **Ambassador in China**; **Masafumi Yamamoto**, who has served as **Ambassador for Japan since October 2024**; and **David Brandes**, appointed **Ambassador for Switzerland in January 2026**.

The group reflects both Kenya's rising profile in green innovation and the increasing visibility of African leadership in connecting technology, sustainability, and development.

In this role, Thigo is expected to help **strengthen the visibility of Kenya's contributions to green technology partnerships and support a stronger connection among innovation ecosystems, intellectual property, and sustainable development**. The appointment also reinforces President Ruto's positioning of Kenya as a shaper of the future of technology through purposeful leadership on sustainability, resilience, and implementation.

[Read the Call](#)


Activities

AI & Emerging Technologies Roundtable, Kenya International Investment Conference.

At KIICO 2026, the Office of the Special Envoy on Technology, in collaboration with KenInvest and AmCham Kenya, organized a high-level AI Roundtable focused on Kenya's investment potential in the Age of Intelligence. The session united leaders from government, industry, and the innovation ecosystem to explore how Kenya can enhance its competitiveness across the entire AI stack – from compute, energy, and data infrastructure to research, applications, talent, and governance.

Investors pointed to USD 250–300 million in projected investment over the next year across data centers, research, and AI use cases in Kenya

A strong market signal emerged from the roundtable. Investors pointed to **USD 250–300 million in projected investment** over the next year across **data centers, research, and AI use cases in Kenya**. That interest, however, came with a clear message: capital will move where the enabling environment is right.

For Kenya, that means sustaining a **pro-innovation policy and regulatory framework**, providing clarity and predictability, and aligning incentives to support long-term investment. The discussion also reinforced that Kenya's opportunity is not limited to one part of the ecosystem. Participants examined how the country can connect its renewable energy advantage, growing digital infrastructure, local research capacity, and innovation base into a more coherent platform for AI growth.

There was particular emphasis on **sovereign compute, localized models, interoperable digital public infrastructure**, and practical use cases that can create economic value within a relatively short time horizon.



From Right: Co-Chairs, **Michael Murungi** (Google), **Amb. Philip Thigo** (TechEnvoy) & **Ms. Pressy Akinyi**, (AmCHAM)

A key theme from the roundtable was that regulation should enable innovation rather than hinder it. Participants supported agile approaches such as a regulatory sandbox, enhancing institutional capacity within existing regulators, and clearer frameworks on data governance, interoperability, and cross-border data flows.

Kenya can build trust and sovereignty while allowing for experimentation, investment, and scaling.

Talent featured prominently throughout the session. Kenya's AI future will depend not only on infrastructure, but also on whether we can deepen local capability, strengthen university-industry linkages, support public-sector AI fluency, and create better pathways for diaspora and global talent to contribute.

Overall, the roundtable highlighted that Kenya has a strong chance of becoming a top AI hub in Africa – but success depends on effective execution, coordination, and swift action.



Call to Action

The Elders

The Elders is an independent group of senior global leaders founded by **Nelson Mandela** in 2007 to leverage their experience, moral authority, and independence to address some of the world's toughest challenges, including *peace, justice, human rights, and the climate crisis*.

Call for Global Governance of Ai

**Governments must act
to govern Ai for
public good.**

We call on governments worldwide to manage Artificial Intelligence with an urgency that reflects both scientific evidence and public concern.

A government's first responsibility is to protect its citizens.

As the scale of AI capability accelerates exponentially, the current gap in governance is becoming a crisis. This must change. Governments have the power to change it - in their people's interests.

We join together as a diverse group of AI leaders, Nobel prize winners, and former Presidents and Prime Ministers to recognise this pivotal moment for the world. AI innovation has the potential to bring great benefits, in healthcare, education, agriculture and elsewhere. But the harms are already visible, and expanding rapidly.

People expect their governments to regulate companies so profit is not prioritised over public safety. We reject claims that governments cannot or should not regulate AI: because technology moves too quickly, because companies will regulate themselves, because geopolitical competition matters more than public safety. These narratives are all misleading.

There is nothing inevitable about how AI develops. Who it benefits and harms is a shared global challenge, not a race between a handful of countries or companies.

[Read the Call](#)



Call to Action

Call for Global Governance of AI

Three Priority areas

1. Peace and security

2. Rule of law & Human Rights

3. Environmental Sustainability

Militaries are integrating commercial AI systems into weapons prematurely. These systems are already enabling violations of international law. The biological, chemical and nuclear risks could be catastrophic.

AI systems are enabling mass surveillance, discrimination and the erosion of civil liberties. AI is driving political disinformation, undermining truth, and exacerbating a breakdown in trust.

AI data centres already consume more electricity than entire countries, and are depleting water reserves in drought-affected regions. These harms often fall disproportionately on the most vulnerable.

We call for a more inclusive global dialogue on AI governance, grounded in scientific research and committed to transparency and accountability. AI safety must be broadened to include its social, political, and economic impact. The United Nations has an essential role.

AI is here to stay. We urge governments and other stakeholders to work collectively to change its trajectory and build a more positive vision. AI should serve humanity, contributing to a safer, more peaceful and prosperous future for everyone.

Signed by:

- **Juan Manuel Santos**, former President of Colombia, Nobel Peace Laureate and Chair of The Elders
- **Gro Harlem Brundtland**, former Prime Minister of Norway
- **Helen Clark**, former Prime Minister of New Zealand
- **Elbegdorj Tsakhia**, former President and Prime Minister of Mongolia
- **Mary Robinson**, former President of Ireland
- **Yoshua Bengio**, Turing Award winner, and Professor at Université de Montréal
- **Kate Crawford**, Professor of AI, University of Southern California and Senior Principal Researcher, Microsoft Research, AI Council of Prime Minister Sánchez of Spain
- **Cynthia Dwork**, Gordon McKay Professor of Computer Science at Harvard University
- **Alondra Nelson**, Harold F. Linder Professor, Institute for Advanced Study; former Acting Director, White House Office of Science and Technology Policy
- **Maria Ressa**, Nobel Peace Prize-Winning Journalist; Cofounder and CEO of Rappler; Professor of Professional Practice, School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University
- **Stuart Russell, OBE, FRS**, Distinguished Professor of Computer Science, University of California, Berkeley, and President, International Association for Safe and Ethical Artificial Intelligence
- **Marietje Schaake**, Non-resident fellow at Stanford, Author of The Tech Coup
- **Lucy Suchman**, Professor Emerita, Anthropologist of Science and Technology
- **Philip Thigo**, Special Envoy on Technology, Republic of Kenya
- **Dame Wendy Hall FRS, FREng**, Regius Professor of Computer Science, University of Southampton
- **Yi Zeng**, Founding Dean, Beijing Institute of AI Safety and Governance & Prof.-Chinese Academy of Sciences

Activities

Africa Forward, France Africa Summit

All hands meeting and strategic retreat

This month, colleagues across the Foreign Service continued work across the thematic pillars of the Africa Forward Africa–France Summit, helping shape an agenda that responds to the strategic realities of the present moment. Among the areas under active development is the track on Artificial Intelligence and Emerging Technologies, which is being advanced in close collaboration with Amb. Clara Chappaz and her team.

In this context, Ambassador Philip Thigo joined colleagues across the Summit workstreams to present an approach anchored on four interrelated pillars: ****sovereignty, human capital, financing across the AI stack, and catalyzing innovation****. Together, these pillars reflect a growing recognition that Africa's engagement with artificial intelligence must be grounded not simply in adoption, but in building the long-term capability to shape, deploy, and govern these technologies in ways that serve its own priorities and realities.

The first pillar, ****sovereignty****, speaks to the need for African countries to build agency across the full technology stack, from data and compute to governance, applications, and institutional capacity. ****Human capital**** underscores the importance of investing in talent, research, skills, and leadership so that Africa is not only a market for AI, but a place where intelligence is developed, applied, and governed.

Financing across the AI stack underscores the need for significant investment in infrastructure, research, startups, public-interest use cases, and the enabling systems that make innovation possible.

Catalyzing innovation focuses on creating the partnerships, ecosystems, and policy conditions required to move from ambition to implementation.

An important cross-cutting dimension of this work is AI safety, which has increasingly emerged as a priority within wider international discussions, including the G7 agenda. For Africa, however, safety must be approached in a way that reflects current realities. It is not only about frontier technical risks. It is also about bias, exclusion, misinformation, institutional preparedness, resilience of public systems, and the broader social and economic consequences of poorly governed technologies. Framed in this way, safety is not separate from innovation or development. It is part of the foundation for building trusted, inclusive, and context-responsive AI ecosystems.



Activities

Advancing Kenya–Korea Cooperation Scaling AI Research and Technology partnerships



This month, I had the pleasure of welcoming **H.E. Kang Hyung-shik, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Kenya**, to our offices for a constructive discussion on the next phase of Kenya–Korea collaboration in emerging technologies.

Our conversation focused on a number of practical areas where both countries are already engaging, and where there is clear opportunity to deepen cooperation. Among these was our continued exchange on AI safety, as well as the evolving conversation around artificial intelligence in the military domain, including the importance of the REAIM process in shaping responsible approaches to these fast-moving technologies. These issues are no longer peripheral. They are becoming central to how countries think about security, governance, innovation, and trust in the Age of Intelligence.

We also explored opportunities to strengthen research and development cooperation, particularly in areas of strategic importance such as semiconductors and advanced technology development.

In this regard, we reflected on the potential for **KAIST** to help anchor deeper collaboration with Kenyan institutions, including possible linkages with **Dedan Kimathi University of Technology's STL**, as Kenya continues to build capability across the innovation and industrial value chain.

A further area of interest was how to strengthen engagement with the State Department for Science, Research and Innovation, under the leadership of Prof. Shaukat Abdulrazak, particularly around research partnerships, scientific capability, and the broader R&D ecosystem.

As Kenya sharpens its ambition to lead not only in digital adoption but also in knowledge production, innovation, and strategic technology capability, these partnerships will matter even more.

What stood out from the discussion was the shared interest in moving beyond general cooperation toward practical action. Kenya and Korea each bring important strengths to this partnership, and there is real value in building structured collaboration across policy, research, talent, safety, and frontier technologies.

Activities

Diplomacy for the Age of Intelligence

Skilling diplomats on impact of new media

We had the privilege of facilitating a session at the Foreign Service Academy for Minister Counselors, Deputy Heads of Mission, and Deputy High Commissioners recently posted to Kenya's missions abroad.

The session focused on the impact of technology and new media on diplomacy, and on what effective statecraft now requires in a world where platforms, data, AI, and digital networks increasingly shape how nations are seen, understood, and engaged.

The central point of the training was that diplomacy is no longer confined to formal meetings, official correspondence, and negotiated texts. It now unfolds in a live, contested, and highly networked information environment. New media is not simply another communication channel to be managed on the side. It is part of the environment in which modern diplomacy is practiced.

That shift requires a different level of preparedness from missions abroad, not only in communication, but also in analysis, responsiveness, narrative discipline, and institutional agility.

We reflected on how the digital era has transformed diplomacy at multiple levels. Diplomats today must address digital geopolitics itself: issues like data governance, platform power, cybersecurity, digital interdependence, and the infrastructure supporting modern economic and political life. Digital topics have become key diplomatic questions, covering AI governance, privacy, online safety, digital trade, and cross-border data flows. Diplomats are also increasingly expected to use digital tools more strategically, whether in public engagement, negotiation support, sentiment analysis, or real-time communication outside the traditional setting.

Digital diplomacy now focuses on understanding audiences, selecting the right platforms, aligning messaging with national priorities, and ensuring that official communication is timely, coherent, and trustworthy.

This work is also part of a broader vision being developed under the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs, with guidance from the Principal Secretary and the Prime Cabinet Secretary, to ensure Kenya's foreign policy and diplomatic practices stay relevant in a rapidly changing world: diplomats today must engage with technologies, platforms, and information systems that increasingly influence power, influence, security, and opportunity.



Activities

Amplifying Development Impact Through Evidence Conversation with IDInsights.

The Office of the Special Envoy on Technology recently held a strategic meeting with **Alison Connor, Chief Operating Officer at IDInsight**, and **Charlene Migwe, Deputy Regional Director for East and Southern Africa**, to discuss the increasing significance of impact evaluation in designing and implementing technology for development.



The conversation focused on how stronger evidence and evaluation frameworks can better inform investments across Digital Public Goods, Digital Public Infrastructure, and the broader AI stack. As governments and development actors place greater emphasis on digital transformation, there is an increasing need to ensure that technology investments are not only innovative but also effective, measurable, and responsive to real public needs. This includes understanding how data can be used more meaningfully for decision-making and action, and how public systems can better capture learning as they scale.

From government service delivery to development-focused AI use cases, impact evaluations can help identify what works, what should be improved, and where the greatest opportunities lie for scaling successful interventions.

The engagement also underscored the importance of building a stronger ecosystem for AI-focused learning, evidence generation, and public-interest deployment.

Collaboration between governments, research and evaluation institutions, and implementation partners will be critical in turning innovation into measurable development progress.

Activities

Designing Inclusivity and innovation at Scale Huawei-ITU, TechCares Forum.

At the **Huawei TECH Cares Forum** during Mobile World Congress 2026 in Barcelona, Ambassador Thigo delivered a keynote on connectivity in the Age of Intelligence, which is an existential requirement.

His intervention placed digital inclusion in a broader strategic frame — not as charity or simply as CSR but as part of the economic architecture required to prepare societies for the future.

Ambassador Thigo argued that inclusion must be a deliberate design choice. **Referring to the DigiTruck, the mobile, solar-powered classroom**, he pointed to the importance of building for the last mile from the outset. Too often, rural and underserved communities are left behind because conventional return-on-investment do not justify immediate deployment.

Yet if the intention to reach them is not built into the design of technology, financing, and partnership models, then exclusion is being designed into the system.

Kenya's own experience reflects the value of that intentionality. With connectivity standing at **46 percent against a regional average of 26 percent**, the country continues to show that it can punch above its weight when inclusion is treated as a strategic priority.

The lesson is that progress from pilot to scale rarely comes from a single policy or technology. It comes from a coordinated partnership.

Ambassador Thigo highlighted the different layers of that partnership: governments to set direction and build trust frameworks; the private sector to innovate and de-risk investment; universities to deepen research and talent pipelines; and civil society to ensure safeguards, accountability, and data protection. It is this ecosystem approach that creates the conditions for sustainable scale and allows new markets to emerge where none previously existed.

The Initiative under the ITU Partners2Connect Digital Coalition, has connected more than **170 million people in remote and underserved communities across more than 80 countries**, surpassing its commitment with skilling and training more than 130,000 people across 21 countries.

In the years ahead, the most consequential gap may not simply be between North and South, but between those who have access to new forms of intelligence and those who do not. It needs to be a new story of building a different kind of growth — one shaped by inclusion, partnership, and scale by design.

See full video here : <https://tinyurl.com/bdh53pjv>



TECH cares
((FROM PROMISE TO IMPACT))

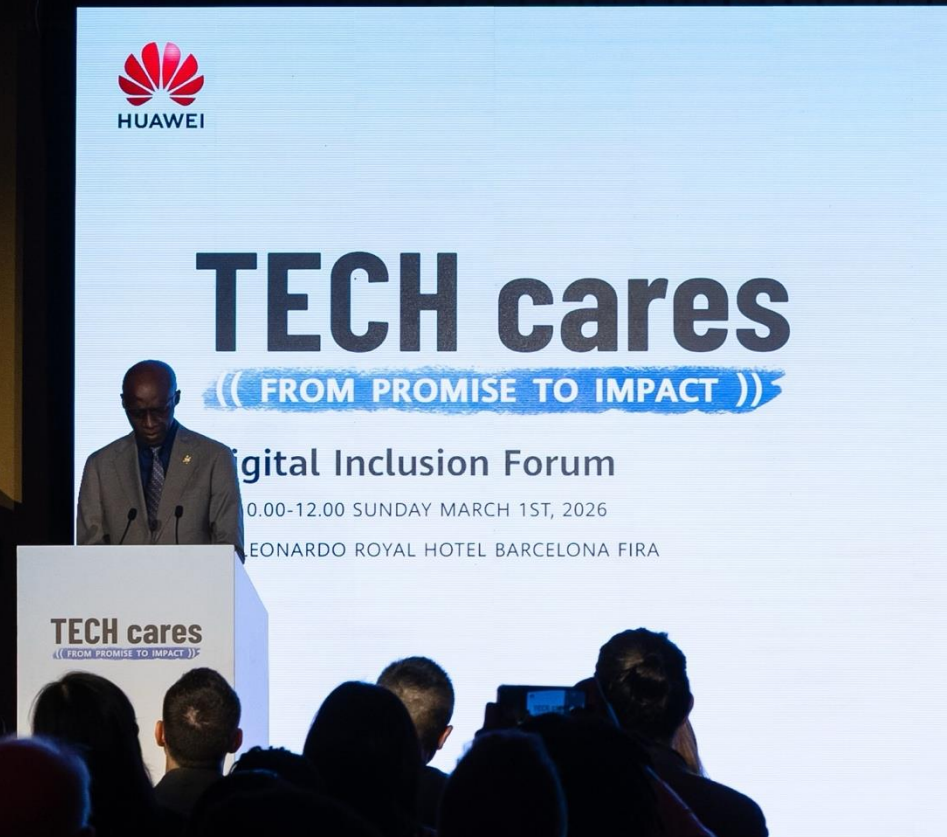
See full video



Activities

Rethinking Ai from the Ground UP

TelecomTV Interview at MWC2026



Interviewed by **Tony Poulos of TelecomTV** at Huawei's **Digital Inclusion Forum during Mobile World Congress** in Barcelona, Ambassador Philip Thigo set out a clear argument that developing countries should not simply copy the AI pathways of advanced economies. Instead, countries like Kenya must build from their own realities — shaped by years of catch-up and leapfrogging — and focus on meaningful use of technology rather than connectivity alone.

He stressed that the real task is to use digital public infrastructure, skills, and energy systems to solve real problems. He pointed to agriculture as a major opportunity, especially across food systems from farm to fork, farm to cup, and farm to plate, while also noting that much of the continent's most valuable data remains undigitized, particularly in healthcare and the creative economy, where data is often oral, visual, and creative rather than text-based.

He outlined Kenya's readiness around four priorities — green energy, compute, talent, and use cases — arguing that AI is not just a tech issue but a societal one, requiring leadership, public institutions, and citizens alike to prepare for the age of intelligence. He also made the case that global engagement must be about securing opportunity, not just representation, and that technologies for developing markets must be rugged, frugal, and trusted

[See full video](#)

Activities

Enhancing regional connectivity Roundtable on accelerating regional infrastructure integration



At the margins of MWC Barcelona, a focused roundtable brought together H.E. Karim Bibi Triki, Minister of Post and Telecommunications of Algeria, and John Omo, to reflect on what it will take to move Africa from fragmented efforts to cohesive investment across the full AI stack.

The conversation was anchored in a shared recognition: Africa cannot afford to build its intelligence capabilities in silos. While progress has been made in expanding connectivity, the next phase requires deliberate investment in infrastructure layers that underpin AI systems — from broadband and data infrastructure to compute and energy.

These are not isolated components; they form an interdependent system that must be designed and financed holistically.

A central theme was the growing importance of shared and distributed compute models. Given the continent's energy constraints and the high capital intensity of AI infrastructure, purely national approaches risk being inefficient and exclusionary. Regional coordination — whether through shared compute hubs, cross-border infrastructure, or harmonized policy frameworks — offers a more viable pathway to scale.

This also reinforces the principle of sovereignty in an era of interdependence: building local capability while leveraging collective strength.

The role of regional institutions, particularly the African Telecommunications Union, was highlighted as critical in convening stakeholders, aligning standards, and supporting investment frameworks that enable interoperability across markets.

Such coordination is essential not only for infrastructure deployment, but also for creating predictable, pro-innovation environments that can attract long-term capital into the AI ecosystem.

As Africa positions itself in the Age of Intelligence, the imperative is clear — to move beyond fragmented pilots and toward deliberate, coordinated execution.

This means aligning infrastructure, policy, financing, and partnerships across borders, ensuring that the continent's AI future is not only built, but built at scale, with resilience, and with shared purpose.

Activities



Bilats at MWC2026

At the margins of MWC 2026, we held a series of productive bilateral engagements focused on deepening partnerships for Africa’s digital transformation and better understanding the evolution of Huawei’s broader technology ecosystem.

Together with Khadija A. Mohamed, we met **Mr. Wang Ke, Global Vice President for Government Relations at Huawei**, where we discussed the importance of stronger public-private collaboration to deliver agile digital solutions that improve service delivery and make a tangible difference in citizens’ everyday lives.

We also engaged **Alex Kang, President of Huawei Cloud Ecosystem, alongside Huawei’s Vice President for Global Market and Ecosystem**, to better understand their ecosystem across liquid cooling, hardware innovation, applications, and the next generation of chips and GPUs, while exploring scalable cloud and ecosystem solutions designed for Africa’s realities and ambitions.

These conversations reinforced a clear point: digital transformation must be co-created, and cloud is not just technology infrastructure, but economic architecture for the Age of Intelligence.



Activities

Global Data Festival and Space Expo 2026

Co-hosted Media Breakfast



The Kenya Space Agency, in Collaboration with the Office of the Special Envoy on Technology, KNBS, and GPSDD, hosted a Media Breakfast Meeting as Kenya gears up for the Global Data Festival and Kenya Space Expo & Conference 2026

The Kenya Space Agency(KSA), in partnership with the Office of the Special Envoy on Technology, Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), and the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD), convened a breakfast meeting with editors from various media houses to brief them on the upcoming joint event, the Global Data Festival and Kenya Space Expo & Conference 2026 (GDF-KSEC 2026), which will take place from 2–5 June 2026 at the Edge Convention Centre and Hotel, Nairobi.

The forum provided an opportunity to familiarize the media with the significance of GDF-KSEC 2026, while showcasing the event's potential to foster collaboration and enhance public engagement. It further emphasized the pivotal role of the media in amplifying discourse on space technology and data, ensuring these conversations reach and resonate with wider audiences.

Among the distinguished speakers at the breakfast meeting were Ambassador Philip Thigo, MBS, Kenya's Special Envoy on Technology; Brigadier Hillary Kipkosgey, Director General of the Kenya Space Agency (KSA); Dr. Macdonald Obudho, Director General of the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS); and Jenna Slotin, Chief Executive Officer of the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD).

In their remarks, the leaders underscored the importance of strong media engagement in raising awareness about the role of space science, data, and technology in addressing societal challenges and advancing sustainable development.

The leaders also reaffirmed their commitment to working collaboratively to ensure the success of The Global Data Festival and Kenya Space Expo & Conference 2026.

Call to Action



#SaferTogether

*It means that no single actor
— not governments, not
platforms, not users — can
create safe spaces alone.
Instead, safety is built
through collective action
across the ecosystem.*

TikTok

Safer Internet
Summit.

Amb. Thigo was privileged to offer opening remarks at the TikTok Safer Internet Summit 2026 in Nairobi, convened under the theme **#SaferTogether: Innovation and Safety**. The opening session brought together **Hon. Kenny Morolong, Deputy Minister** in the Presidency of the Republic of South Africa, **Valiant Richey, TikTok's Vice President for Global Trust and Safety**, and was headlined by **Hon. William Kabogo Gitau, Cabinet Secretary for Information, Communications and the Digital Economy**.

In his remarks, Amb. Philip Thigo situated the conversation in the Age of Intelligence — a moment when platforms are no longer just spaces for expression, but increasingly engines of creativity, livelihoods, and public discourse.

With more than **17 million Kenyans on TikTok**, many of them young people, the platform is helping shape a new creative economy while also reflecting something deeply Kenyan: Harambee in the digital age through solidarity, fundraising, and community support.

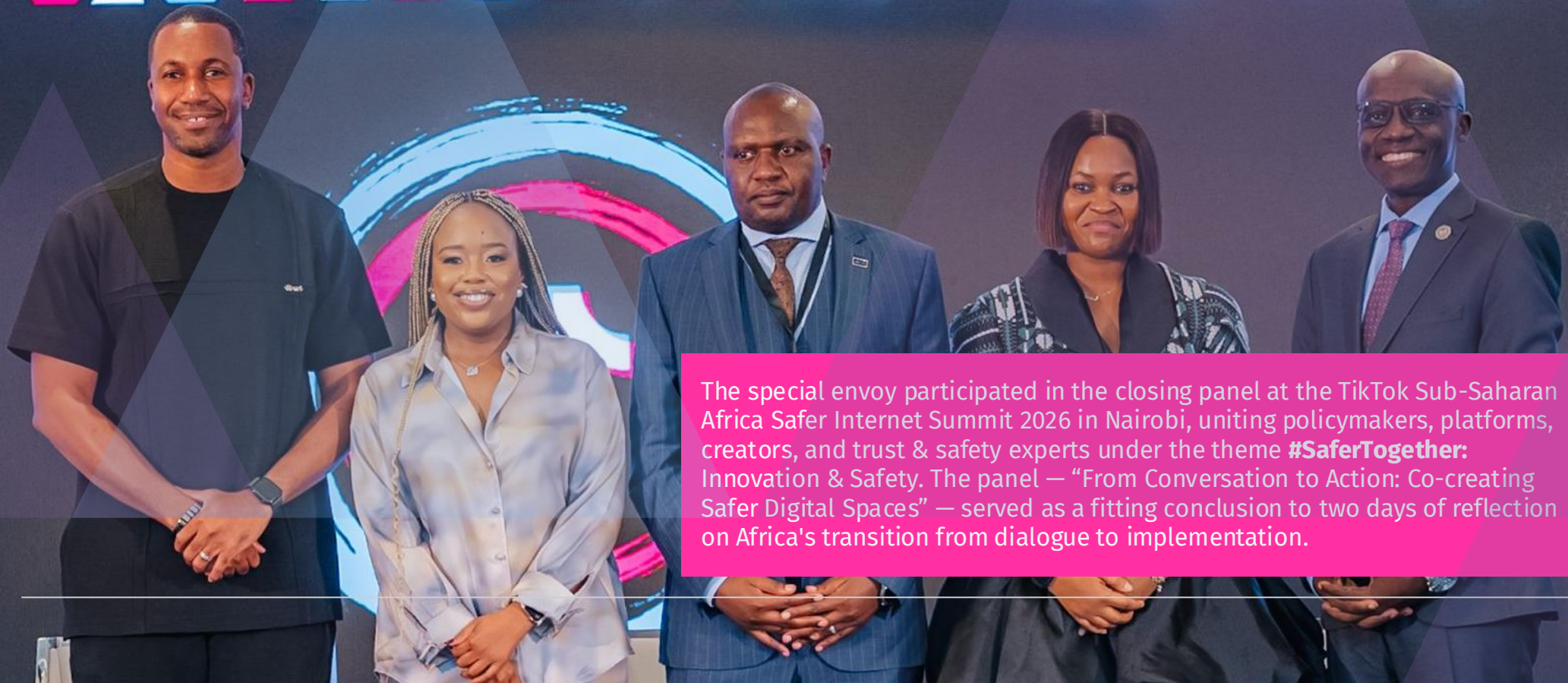
At the same time, the Summit underscored a central imperative: in an era of AI-generated content, misinformation, and deepfakes, safety, trust, and information integrity must remain foundational.

Amb. Thigo welcomed TikTok's continued collaboration on content moderation, safety systems, and platform integrity, noting that if innovation is matched with responsibility, platforms like TikTok can become not just spaces of content, but platforms for opportunity, trust, and societal impact.

Activities

Co-Creating Safer Digital Spaces

#Tiktok: from conversation to Action



The special envoy participated in the closing panel at the TikTok Sub-Saharan Africa Safer Internet Summit 2026 in Nairobi, uniting policymakers, platforms, creators, and trust & safety experts under the theme **#SaferTogether: Innovation & Safety**. The panel — “From Conversation to Action: Co-creating Safer Digital Spaces” — served as a fitting conclusion to two days of reflection on Africa's transition from dialogue to implementation.

activities

Co-Creating Safer Digital Spaces Actions for the future!

The discussion was anchored in a broader shift we are living through. We are no longer in the Information Age — we are in what I often refer to as the Age of Intelligence, where digital platforms are not just channels of communication, but environments that shape identity, opportunity, relationships and livelihoods.

This is particularly true for Africa's youth. Across the continent, young people are not simply consuming content — they are creating, earning, learning and participating in entirely new economic and cultural systems. This makes digital safety not just a policy issue but also a priority for development and societal resilience.

One of the central tensions explored was how to ensure that regulation provides guardrails without becoming roadblocks. The answer is not to choose between innovation and safety, but to build the capability to do both. This means investing in regulatory maturity, strengthening institutional capacity, and ensuring that policy frameworks are locally grounded yet globally interoperable. It also means recognizing that safety cannot be achieved through regulation alone — it requires a broader ecosystem of digital literacy, platform responsibility, and active citizen participation.



Youth remained at the centre of the conversation. Africa's demographic reality presents a profound opportunity — but only if we invest intentionally. Safety cannot be designed for young people alone; it must be built with them. This includes scaling AI and media literacy, supporting the creator economy, strengthening digital wellbeing and mental health frameworks, and ensuring that youth voices are meaningfully included in policy and platform design. A safe internet, in this context, is not only about protection —

it is about **expanding agency and unlocking potential**. A powerful reflection emerging from the Summit was that, in an era increasingly shaped by automation and AI, there is growing value in what technology cannot replicate — **the messy, beautiful, unscripted human experience**. Africa's digital spaces are rich with culture, creativity and community. The task before us is to ensure that AI systems and digital platforms amplify these qualities, rather than diminish them.

Ultimately, the panel underscored that digital safety is a **shared responsibility**. Governments must enable forward-looking, adaptive policy environments. Platforms must design with safety, transparency and accountability at their core. Media must continue to uphold trust and verification. Creators must model responsible engagement. And citizens must actively shape the digital cultures they participate in. This is what sovereignty looks like in an interconnected world — not isolation, but **coordinated responsibility across stakeholders**.

Activities

Kenya - Europe building the Age of Intelligence Tech Business Offer Forum Kenya

At the EU Tech Business Offer Forum Kenya, we had the opportunity to engage on a question that is becoming increasingly important for all of us: where Kenya stands in the AI journey, and what it will take to build real, durable capability in the Age of Intelligence.

My reflection was that Kenya's progress is promising, but uneven. In financial services, we are ahead. In academia, there are important pockets of strong research and innovation, including work on local language models, translation, and AI safety, though the broader ecosystem still has ground to cover. In government, there is clear intent and growing momentum, including ongoing efforts to build AI literacy across the public service, but institutional fluency remains a work in progress.

Our long-term focus must be on education. Not just training in the narrow sense, but formation from foundational learning through to university, research, and applied innovation. We must prepare an entire generation to work, lead, and solve problems in a world where intelligence is becoming embedded across every sector.

Kenya and Europe are not starting from the same place, but we are increasingly anchored in the same values: **safety, security, inclusivity, sustainability, and public trust**. Shared values provide the foundation for deeper cooperation, especially in a domain as consequential as AI.

But values alone are not enough. We must move to practical investments across the full AI stack — talent, data, infrastructure, compute, research, and applications. Including building real capacity, catalytic financing, and deployable solutions.

We should stop thinking about AI as something reserved for a small technical class as we are not simply living through another wave of technological change. The opportunity is for every profession and every sector to become stronger by integrating these tools into what they already do well.

Kenya's focus is on shaping the future of AI that reflects our realities, advances our priorities, builds sovereign capability while remaining globally connected.

That is the work ahead. And it will demand seriousness, investment, and partnerships that match the ambition's scale.



Activities

Advancing Digital Cooperation with Lithuania Kenya International Investment Conference.

During this month, we held a productive bilateral meeting with **H.E. Vidmantas Verbickas, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lithuania**. He was accompanied by **Mr. Vytautas Pinkus, Director for Global Affairs**; **Ms. Asta Slavinskaitė, Deputy Director for External Economic Relations and Economic Security**; and **Ms. Aistė Bertulytė, Director of the Development Cooperation Department**. I was joined by **H.E. Amb. Angeline K. Musili, Kenya's Ambassador to Norway, Sweden, and Lithuania**.

Our discussions focused on how Kenya and Lithuania can enhance practical cooperation in several key areas within the digital and technology sectors. These included cybersecurity partnerships, governance and implementation of artificial intelligence, development of digital public infrastructure, and new avenues for talent exchange between our countries. The dialogue reflected a shared understanding that digital cooperation must be rooted not just in policy discussions but also in concrete actions that build resilience, capabilities, and opportunities.

We also looked for ways to jointly support the growth of innovation ecosystems, including potential collaboration on a GovTech Lab model. Special focus was given to initiatives that can create more opportunities for women in technology and boost youth involvement in building inclusive digital marketplaces. These are vital paths to ensure that digital transformation is both widespread and socially inclusive.

The meeting also reaffirmed the strong foundation of trust in Kenya-Lithuania relations, including our successful partnership in shaping global digital governance processes.



H.E. Vidmantas Verbickas, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lithuania (Center) **Mr. Vytautas Pinkus**, Director for Global Affairs (Extreme left); **Ms. Aistė Bertulytė**, Director of the Development Cooperation Department (Second Left). **H.E. Amb. Angeline K. Musili**, Kenya's Ambassador to Norway, Sweden, and Lithuania. (Extreme right).

Activities

Kenya-Lithuania Political Consultation Advancing Digital Cooperation



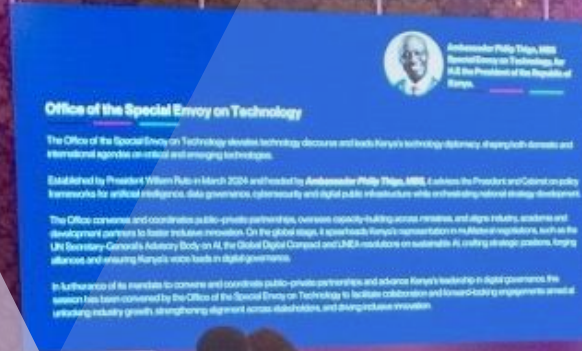
Kenya and Lithuania held substantive political dialogue consultations led on the Kenyan side by **H.E. Amb. Josephat Maikara, Director General at the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs**, and on the Lithuanian side by **Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs H.E. Vidmantas Verbickas**.

The dialogue reaffirmed the strong and growing partnership between Kenya and Lithuania, with discussions focusing on practical cooperation in **cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, digital public infrastructure, talent mobility, and the development of innovation ecosystems**, including opportunities around a **GovTech Lab model, advancing women in technology, and supporting youth-led digital marketplaces**.

Both sides also emphasized the importance of information integrity, including collaboration to address misinformation and disinformation, strengthen digital literacy and democratic resilience, and build trusted digital environments that support innovation and inclusive growth.

Activities

Shaping Kenya's Emerging Virtual Assets Framework Kenya's Virtual Assets Dialogue



We cohosted a high-level regulatory roundtable with the **Virtual Assets Chamber of Commerce, Circle** alongside the Kenya International Investment Conference. The session convened policymakers, regulators, banks, telcos, fintechs, stablecoin issuers, exchanges, payment providers, and global digital asset actors to engage on the implementation of Kenya's Virtual Asset Service Providers framework.

With the VASP Act now in force and draft regulations moving toward finalization, attention is now firmly on the details that will determine whether Kenya can build a framework that is credible, innovative, and globally competitive.

Key issues include licensing and capital requirements, stablecoin treatment, market intermediaries, interoperability, and the broader operational realities shaping compliance and market participation.

Digital assets are no longer at the margins of financial sector discussions. They are increasingly central to the future of payments, capital flows, and digital market infrastructure.

A key takeaway from the roundtable was the importance of co-creation. Effective regulation cannot be developed in isolation. It requires sustained engagement between public institutions and market actors, grounded in evidence, operational experience, and a shared understanding of risk and opportunity.

Stakeholders offering practical feedback, comparative insights from other jurisdictions, and proposals to ensure Kenya's framework remains enabling while safeguarding trust and integrity.

As African countries continue to develop their own digital asset regimes, Kenya is increasingly being seen as a potential reference point for balancing innovation, regulation, and market development.

Insights from the session will help inform the Virtual Assets Chamber of Commerce's formal submission to the National Treasury ahead of the public participation deadline. More broadly, the convening reflected a welcome shift from fragmented conversations to structured, outcome-driven collaboration. That is exactly what this moment requires.

Activities

Kenya-Finland Political Consultation

Deepening collaboration on space and digital technologies

Privileged to have been part of the Kenya-Finland Political Consultations in Nairobi, led by Korir Sing'Oei, Principal Secretary, State Department for Foreign Affairs, Republic of Kenya, and H.E. Jukka Salovaara, Permanent State Secretary, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

As we move from the digital era into the Age of Intelligence, this partnership is increasingly anchored in what matters most: technology, resilience, skills, and deployment.

Our discussions focused on advancing cooperation across the full technology stack — from **secure communications and advanced connectivity (5G/6G)** to **AI, data systems, digital twins, and situational awareness platforms** — and how these translate into real-world impact across public systems, infrastructure, and services.

A key pillar is talent — building the skills needed not just to adopt technology, but to design, deploy, and scale it.

Equally, we aligned on the importance of trusted digital systems — **cyber resilience, secure public infrastructure, and information integrity** — as the foundation for sustainable digital transformation.



Directive

H.E President Ruto underscored three priority areas that should remain central to Kenya's long-term prosperity: **industrialization, the digital economy, and climate resilience.**

19th Ambassadors Conference

19th AMBASSADORS' CONFERENCE
Advancing Kenya's National Interests in a Rapidly Evolving Geopolitical Landscape

I was privileged to join fellow Special Envoys, Ambassadors, High Commissioners, and Honorary Consuls at Kenya's **19th Ambassadors' Conference**, convened at an important moment for the country's foreign policy and international engagement. The Conference provided an important platform to reflect on how Kenya's diplomatic footprint must evolve in response to a rapidly shifting geopolitical environment.

In his remarks, H.E. President William Ruto called for a more assertive and strategically aligned diplomacy, urging Kenya's missions abroad to focus on tangible outcomes that advance national interests.

He emphasized the role of diplomacy as a frontline instrument for expanding trade, attracting investment, strengthening regional integration, and positioning Kenya effectively in a changing global order.

President Ruto also underscored three priority areas that should remain central to Kenya's long-term prosperity: **industrialization, the digital economy, and climate resilience, which** Kenya's diplomatic engagement must actively support through partnerships, investment, and international cooperation.

The Conference therefore reaffirmed the importance of a foreign policy that is closely aligned with national development priorities and responsive to evolving global realities. It also underscored the need for Kenya's diplomacy to remain practical, ambitious, and results-oriented in how it advances the country's interests across bilateral, regional, and multilateral platforms.

Activities

Advancing Science, Technology and Innovation as a pillar for Kenya's Economic Diplomacy



Ambassador Philip Thigo participated in a high-level dialogue on Kenya's strategic positioning in Science, Technology and Innovation (STI), alongside **Jessy K. Maruti (ICT Authority)** and **Hillary Kipkosgey (Kenya Space Agency)**.

Framed by **Prof. Shaukat Abdulrazak (State Department for Science, Research and Innovation)** and moderated by **Amb. Linnet Mwendu Ndile (Kenya Embassy, Beijing)** highlighted STI as both an economic driver and a core instrument of foreign policy.

The dialogue focused on three strategic shifts: **from presence to positioning—leveraging missions to attract investment, partnerships, and talent; from adoption to sovereignty—building capability across the AI stack while enabling Kenyan talent globally and attracting global talent, including the diaspora; and from knowledge to application—scaling Digital Public Infrastructure and translating innovation into investment-ready use cases.**

The panel also underscored Kenya's leadership in technology governance and its emergence as a hub for intelligence—spanning data, compute, and digital infrastructure—alongside growing investments in AI skilling and new frontiers such as the space economy, with applications across agriculture, climate intelligence, and national development.

Overall, the conversation reinforced a shift from knowledge to execution—translating capability into competitiveness, investment, and real economic value in the Age of Intelligence.

Activities

OECD Policy Toolkit Shaping AI Governance

In March, Nairobi hosted an important policy dialogue on the future of artificial intelligence in Africa, bringing together senior policymakers, researchers, innovators, and private sector leaders from 13 African countries. Convened by the OECD.AI and the Government of Kenya, with support from Agence Française de Développement and the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, the two-day workshop focused on ensuring that Africa is not simply responding to global AI developments, but actively shaping them.

The workshop, held under the theme African AI Priorities and Experiences: **Building an AI Policy Toolkit, sought to inform the forthcoming OECD AI Policy Toolkit** so that it reflects African realities, priorities, and implementation needs. Discussions focused on the practical questions governments are grappling with today: how to design and implement effective AI policies, how regulatory experimentation is emerging across countries, how AI can be applied in sectors such as agriculture and development, and what opportunities and trade-offs come with locally developed small and large language models.

The event was opened by **Hon. William Kabogo Gitau, E.G.H., Cabinet Secretary** for Information, Communications and the Digital Economy, and featured a **keynote address by Ambassador Thigo**.

His keynote underscored a central point for the continent's AI future: governance tools cannot be built in abstraction from the policymakers and institutions expected to use them.

They must be informed by lived realities, local priorities, and the practical constraints and opportunities that shape public policy across African countries.

A particularly valuable dimension of the workshop was the direct exchange among countries that are already building elements of their own AI ecosystems. Their experiences added depth to the conversation, grounding it in implementation. This made clear that Africa's contribution to global AI governance will be strongest when it is rooted in its own development priorities, institutional contexts, and ambition for inclusive and sustainable growth.

Amb. Thigo addressing the OECD Policy Workshop



KE - Amb. Philip Thigo

Pio Smith, UNFPA

Sanjay Pradhan

Wendy



Ndidi Okonkwo Nwuneli

Jenna Slotin



Activities

Global Partnership on Data Board Meeting.

Chaired by **United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed**, the Board meeting brought together senior global leaders including **Professor Jane Naana Opoku-Agyemang**, Vice President of Ghana, and **Elizabeth Cousens**, President and CEO of the **United Nations Foundation**, among other colleagues, for a timely discussion on the status of the 2026 Global Data Festival.

Ambassador Philip Thigo, MBS, was privileged to attend and brief the Board, framing the discussion around the geopolitics of data, sovereignty in the age of AI, and the urgent need for stronger financing for data systems and digital public infrastructure.

The conversation reinforced why the Festival matters: data is no longer simply a technical issue, but a strategic question of power, agency, and development. For Africa and the Global South, this is an important platform to help shape a more inclusive and representative agenda on data governance, AI, and financing — one that reflects their realities, priorities, and voice in the emerging global order.



*Office of the Special Envoy
on Technology*

Techplomacy

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